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ABSTRACT

This high school unit of study on India's Mahatma Gandhi is designed to be used in courses of contemporary problems, government, and 20th century history. The unit contains a listing of the course objectives, needed resource materials, teaching strategies, and evaluation procedures. The course is taught over a 9-day period, and brief lesson plans are given with a daily central focus such as research, brainstorming, and problem solving. A lecture, chronology of Gandhi's life, his philosophy, and literacy works of influence are included to aid the teacher's planning, along with study questions, a quiz on Gandhi's life, an essay test, a research project, and student activities. A student performance critique sheet is also provided. (DJC)

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GANDHIJI: A STUDY OF NON-VIOLENT CONFLICT RESOLUTION

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GANDHIJI: A STUDY OF NON-VIOLENT CONFLICT RESOLUTION
UNIT OF STUDY
DONNA L. BERTOT

Grade level: upper secondary: to be adapted for Contemporary Problems, Model United Nations, Government or 20th Century History courses.

A. Introduction to the unit

1. Curriculum needs for which the unit is designed
   a. to bolster Asian studies programs
   b. to examine problems of newly independent nations

2. Content objectives of the unit
   a. to acquaint students with the life and philosophy of Mohandas Gandhi
   b. to study the role played by Satyagraha in the achievement of Indian independence
   c. to investigate current world problems
   d. to expose students to various methods of non-violent problem solving

3. Skill objectives of the unit
   a. to improve listening and note-taking skills
   b. to encourage the development of research skills
   c. to develop problem solving and critical thinking skills
   d. to develop writing and speaking skills as students report the results of independent research

4. Travel-Study material to be used
   a. The Story of My Life by M. K. Gandhi (abridged version of Gandhi's Autobiography published for use in schools) Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, @1955/reprint 1986
   b. Notes from lecture by and interview of Dr. P. Machwe, New Delhi, July 8, 1987
   c. Slides and notes from visits to Birla House and Gandhi Museum, New Delhi, July 1987
   d. Slides, notes, and brochures from visit to Satyagraha Ashram, Ahmedabad, July 14, 1987
   e. Notes from discussion with secondary students and teacher Ms. Mehta at Sulochandevi Singhania School, Thane (near Bombay), July 13, 1987
   f. Slides and notes from visit to Tagore House, Calcutta, July 29, 1987
   g. Excerpts from "Young India" and "Harijan" purchased in reprint at Ahmedabad

5. Teaching procedures
   a. Lecture
   b. Discussion and brain storming
   c. Slide presentation
   d. Supervision of research
   e. Supervision of student reports and presentations
   f. Supervision of in-class essay

6. Evaluation procedures
   a. Quiz on life of Gandhi
   b. Critique of student group presentations based on:
      (1) student knowledge of subject matter
      (2) amount and quality of research
      (3) organization of presentation
      (4) essay on Satyagrapha and non-violent problem solving

B. Class Sessions

1. Day one--presenting the model
   (Note: I want to use my personal slides and observations for this introductory lecture. Other teachers could begin with the biographical material of Day two or show portions of the movie, Gandhi, on VHS.)
   a. Write quotation on blackboard: "Generations to come, it may be, will scarce believe that such a one as this, ever in flesh and blood, walked upon this earth."--Albert Einstein
   b. Deliver lecture (see attached materials) as students take notes or distribute copies which they can highlight
   c. Show slides

2. Day two--the Life of Gandhi
   a. Write quotation on blackboard: "I have nothing new to teach the world. Truth and non-violence are as old as hills."--M.K. Gandhi
   b. Hand out Chronology (see materials) of the life of Gandhi and discuss with students
   c. Discuss Gandhi's concept of truth and have large group answer Study Questions, part I, orally

3. Day three--Brainstorm
   a. Write quotation on blackboard: "Non-violent resistance--it certainly has an important sphere: as against the British in India, Gandhi led to triumph. But it depends upon the existence of certain virtues in those against whom it is employed. When Indians lay down on railways and challenged the authorities to

crush them under trains, the British found such cruelty intolerable." --Bertrand Russell

b. Administer short Quiz on Life of Gandhi

c. Continue discussion with Study Questions, part II, ending with brainstorming activity

4. Day four--Research
   a. Write quotation on blackboard: "The intellectual and moral satisfaction that I failed to gain from the utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill, the revolutionary methods of Marx and Lenin, the social contracts theory of Hobbes, the "back to nature" optimism of Rousseau and the superman philosophy of Nietzsche, I found in the non-violent resistance philosophy of Gandhi."
   --Martin Luther King
   b. Write list of problems from brainstorming activity on blackboard
   c. Let students form small groups with three or four members and choose one problem for each group to investigate (At this point issues should be evaluated in relation to research facilities available and abilities of the group)
   d. Distribute the Criteria for Creative Problem Solving and Research Project Assignment

5. Day five--Library Research
   a. Accompany students to media center
   b. Supervise research and note-taking
   c. (Note: this portion of the project may be lengthened)

6. Day six--Devising a Problem-Solving Plan
   a. Write quotation on blackboard: "Therefore, I say, the best observance of Gandiji's birth centenary would be to supply the people the basic amenities of life."
   --Khansaheb Abdul Gaffar Khan
   b. Have students work in classroom to develop a plan for non-violent action in dealing with the problem they have researched.
   c. (Note: it may be desirable to have this part of the project continue for another day or two or even longer depending on the amount of time available for the project)

7. Days seven and eight--Small Group Presentations
   a. Give each group 15 minutes to a half hour to present its plan
   b. Ask for questions and criticism from the class as a whole after each presentation

c. Evaluate each presentation according to Critique Sheet

8. Day nine--Evaluation
   a. Write quotation on the blackboard: "The power and creative suffering must be evident to anyone my age, for this generation into which I happen to have been born, has not only been Hitler's generation in the West and Stalin's in Russia: it has also been Gandhi's in India: and it can already be forecast with some confidence that Gandhi's effect on human history is going to be greater and more lasting than either Stalin's or Hitler's."--Toynbee
   b. Ask students to write an in-class essay evaluating the unit (see materials)
   c. Evaluate essays on basis of clarity, organization, and evidence of student understanding of the issues

MATERIALS:

LECTURE

In the book Freedom at Midnight the authors say that Lord Mountbatten, the last British viceroy of colonial India, thought that Mohandas K. Gandhi would be remembered in the future. In fact, at the time of Gandhi's death Mountbatten said, "Mahatma Gandhi will go down in history on a par with Christ and Buddha." (Collins and Lapierre, Freedom at Midnight, Simon and Schuster, NY 1975, p. 103) When I read that I was pretty amazed at the comparison. After all Christ and Buddha have been worshipped as gods. Empires have been won and lost in their names. Their philosophies have influenced millions of people. It was very exciting to think that someone who had lived in our own century might be the hero or even the god of future generations. I frankly thought the idea was a little exaggerated but I decided that I would try and find out what exactly it was about Gandhi and his ideas that could lead to such a claim while I was travelling in India.

The first place that I visited where Gandhi was particularly remembered was Birla House--the scene of his assassination in 1948. In the museum part I saw that a lot of effort and devotion had been given to preserving Gandhi's story. In one room there were scenes from his life illustrated with dolls painstakingly dressed to represent people whith whom he had worked. In another room there were paintings of various artists' interpretations of important moments in his life. These were mainly historical, but another room seemed almost like a shrine with his bed and plate and cup and a model of the three little monkeys, "hear no evil, see no evil, say no evil," that he had carried with him reverently displayed. More importantly, the people going through the museum, Indians and foreigners alike, seemed respectful and sad: the way pilgrims seem when they visit a religious place. The same kind of feeling was evident at other sites that I visited. In the Gandhi Museum in Delhi there were pieces of clothing that he had worn (and spun himself) and even a mold of his teeth. At the Satyagraha Ashram in Ahmedabad where he had tried to put his beliefs into practice there are beautiful displays showing events in his life, letters he exchanged with Toistoy, Bernard Shaw, and world leaders and even a letter he wrote to Adolf Hitler trying to persuade him to change his course in Europe.

Probably the most exciting experience that I had in researching the life of Gandhi was meeting a person who had been his close friend. Dr. P. Machwe, a literature professor in Delhi, lived with Gandhi on the ashram and had his marriage arranged by Gandhi. In his description of the Mahatma, I began to see some of the reasons for his greatness and to think that it is important for all of you to be more familiar with the Gandhian work and philosophy. In a

conversation with a group of Indian high school students. I was told that Gandhi's non-violent methods don't work in the world today and that they feel that they have "to be more forceful." What we're going to do in the next few days is study about Gandhi's life and philosophy and see if we agree with their pessimism or if you can find ways in which Gandhi's example may be relevant to problems that the world now faces.

One thing I noticed in the Delhi Gandhi Museum was that the pictures illustrating Satyagraha did not end with Gandhi's assassination but went on to show scenes from the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, from the protest against the war in Vietnam, and from more recent protests against nuclear armament. We'll be trying to judge how effective these protests have been and if they have been outgrowths of Gandhi's work as well as looking to see if there are other ways in which his philosophy might be used.

SLIDES

I have about 15 slides showing statues of Gandhi in various cities as well as pictures from Satyagraha Ashram and the Delhi Gandhi Museum. Following their showing, I will take questions from students.

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CHRONOLOGY

EVENTS FROM THE LIFE OF GANDHI

October 2, 1869--Birth in Porbandar, Gujarat
1881--Marriage to Kasturba at age 13
1891--Return to India after education in law in England
1893--Travel to South Africa to serve as legal advisor
1904--Establishment of Phoenix Settlement
1906--Establishment of Indian Ambulance service during Zulu uprising
1907--Development of Satyagraha (The force which is born of truth and Love or non-violence. Truth--satya; firmness--agraha) against race discrimination in South Africa. Jail
1914--Success of Satyagraha in South Africa. Return to India.
1915--Founding of Satyagraha Ashram in Ahmedabad
1917--Champaran Satyagraha. Gandhi champions indigo-growing peasants against planters. "Tinkathia" system where each peasant owed three-twentieths of his crop to his landlord is abolished
1918--Kheda Satyagraha against unfair taxes on crops. Arrangement is made for wealthier peasants to pay, but poorer ones to be excused.
1919--Protest against Rowlatt Act. Gandhi proposes "hartal" or day of mourning for whole country for April 6. April 13. Brig. Gen. Dyer fires on crowd and kills 1500 people in Amritsar.
1920--Gandhi institutes non-cooperation--boycott of all things British.
1921--Bonfire of foreign cloth at Bombay. Gandhi adopts spinning wheel as symbol of peaceful revolution. Gandhi tours India preaching his message.
1922--Gandhi tried on charges of sedition and imprisoned
1924--Twenty-one day fast for communal unity
1930--"Dandi March" protest against the salt tax. Gandhi and followers march 240 miles and begin to make salt from sea water. Gandhi imprisoned.
1931--Second round-table conference. Gandhi meets the British King-Emperor George VI in London.
1932--"Fast unto death" protests against untouchability
1933--Gandhi at Wardha Ashram
1934--AI Village Industries Association founded
1942--"Quit India" Movement. Gandhi imprisoned at Poona--fasts for twenty-one days.
1944--Death of Kasturba in prison
1946--Peace March in Noakhali for communal harmony
1947--Independence on 15th August. Gandhi fasts in Calcutta to keep communal groups from rioting.
1948--January 30. Assassination at prayer time

PHILOSOPHY

Opposition to caste system
Belief in equality
Belief that no labor is mean
Belief that all life is sacred
Belief that there is a law above man:
God is love and love is god.
God is truth and truth is god.
Belief that man needs to continue to improve himself
Belief that violence can't curb violence
Belief that man can extinguish violence only through non-violence
Belief in methods of civil disobedience (i.e. marches, protests, refusing to pay taxes, fasts)
Belief in personal sacrifice

IMPORTANT INFLUENCES (Good as extra reading)

John Ruskin, Unto This Last
Henry David Thoreau, On Civil Disobedience
Tolstoy, The Kingdom of God is Within You
Bhagavadgita
The Bible (especially the New Testament)

(most information from lecture by Dr. Machwe)

CRITERIA FOR CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

1. Research your problem as completely as possible, taking notes on its main aspects.

2. Brainstorm as many possible solutions as you can.

3. List five criteria that you think are the most important for judging your solution.

4. List your ten best alternative solutions and rate each one according to each of the five criteria. (It is easier if you make a little chart) Rate each alternative on each criterion according to a scale of 1 (poorest) to 10 (best)

STUDY QUESTIONS, PART I

1. What was "Satyagraha"?

2. Where did Gandhi first try to use non-violent resistance? Against what policies?

3. List some of the methods which Gandhi used to protest unfair policies.

4. Why did Gandhi and his followers burn British cloth and begin to spin their own?

5. Of what significance was the "march to the sea" and the making of salt.

6. It has been said that Gandhi's methods worked against the British because they basically believed in democracy and "fair play." Could Satyagraha have been used against Hitler or Stalin? Why or Why not?

7. What kinds of conditions have to be present for non-violent resistance to work?

QUIZ ON LIFE OF GANDHI

1. Gandhi was married at what age? _____
2. He was educated in _____ as a lawyer, but he had trouble beginning a practice in India.

3. Instead, he took an opportunity to travel to _____ _____ to work as a legal advisor to an Indian firm.

4. When he saw how unfairly Indians there were treated he developed a method of non-violent resistance or _____.

5. In 1919 the British passed the _____ Acts which allowed the police to arrest and detain people suspected of anti-government agitation.

6. In response, Gandhi encouraged Indians to stay home and pray and to do no work. This strategy was called _____.

7. _____ was a non-violent boycott instituted after the killing of the crowd at Amritsar.

8. In 1931 Gandhi travelled to England to discuss India's

problems and future with _____.
The press showed pictures of him wearing only his simple dhoti and leading his goats.

9. The last great protest movement aimed at getting the British to grant home rule for India was called the _____ Movement and was begun in 1942.

10. India was finally granted independence on _____ because the day before was found to be "inauspicious."

STUDY QUESTIONS, PART II

1. Which of Gandhi's methods were employed in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States?

2. Were non-violent methods effective in the protest against the Vietnam War in the 60's and early 70's?

3. How effective do you think the protest against nuclear armament has been?

4. What other problems have been attacked by methods similar to those used by Gandhi?

5. What other non-violent methods do individuals and groups or nations use to try to settle conflicts?

6. What are some of the successes and failures of the United Nations? Of other international bodies?

7. What are the problems facing such groups?

8. Brainstorm and make a list of world problems that might be approached using Gandhi's methods or other non-violent strategies.

RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT

Each group is to research the problem which they have selected using library and classroom materials. You will then meet to draw up a plan of possible solutions to your problem using non-violent methods and the criteria sheet. You should prepare a report which includes a clear statement of the problem and the presentation of your solution. It is expected that all group members will share equally in the research for and development of your plan.

ESSAY ASSIGNMENT

You are to write an in-class essay in which you will evaluate our unit on Gandhi and non-violence. First tell what things you have learned about Gandhi, his life and work and about Satyagraha. Then, please go on to tell what you have learned about the particular world problem that your group investigated. Do you think that you chose a problem that can really be solved using non-violent methods? Why or why not? Which non-violent methods might work best? What did you learn about problem solving during this unit? The essays will be graded on the basis of clarity, organization of ideas, and evidence that you have developed an understanding of the issues.

CRITIQUE SHEET

I. Research--25 points possible

A. Time in library well used

B. Notes readable and organized

C. Group members all have responsibilities

D. Researched evidence is to the point

II. Understanding of Problem--25 points possible

A. Problem is clearly defined

B. Students understand basic issues involved

III. Criteria for problem solving--15 points

A. Reasonable criteria have been developed

B. Consequences of the proposed solution have been considered

C. Plan is feasible and has been developed using criteria

III. Organization of Presentation--25 points possible

A. Statement of problem is clear

B. Clear step-by-step plan is presented

C. All group members participate in presentation

IV. Overall effect of Presentation--10 points